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**Duncan Announces One-Stop Service
Center for Hurricane Katrina Evacuees**

Montgomery County Executive Douglas M. Duncan announced today that the County Crisis Center will serve as the one-stop service center for Hurricane Katrina evacuees who have relocated to Montgomery County. American Red Cross disaster relief services are now available at the Crisis Center to provide easy access to an array of support services for Hurricane Katrina evacuees.

“The Gulf Coast families who have come to our area have experienced incredible hardship and loss,” said County Executive Douglas M. Duncan, “and we want to help them begin to rebuild their lives.”

“The people of Montgomery County have shown, time and time again, their generosity and compassion for others,” said Councilmember George Leventhal. “That is certainly the case with Hurricane Katrina victims. We are making it easier for them to begin putting their lives back together with this one-stop service center.”

Services available through the one-stop center include:

- Income supports - emergency assistance, Food Stamps, Medicaid, and other financial assistance.
- Emergency shelter, transitional housing, and on-going case management
- Mental health screening, crisis counseling, connection with treatment providers
- Health care screening, connection with treatment providers
- Connection with Montgomery County Public Schools and other local resources for individuals and families.

Telephone and walk-in services are available at the Crisis Center 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Red Cross disaster volunteers are available at the Crisis Center seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. to provide assistance to individuals displaced by this

disaster. The Crisis Center is located at 1301 Piccard Drive in Rockville. The telephone number is 240-777-4000.

“The mission of the American Red Cross is to prevent, prepare and respond to disasters,” said Kumara Rama, executive director of the American Red Cross of the National Capital Area, Montgomery County Office. “No one could have prevented this disaster but the Red Cross is here to respond and help evacuees who have come to Montgomery County begin to rebuild their lives.”

In addition to providing service for evacuees who have re-located to Montgomery County, the County has responded by dispatching personnel and equipment to the Gulf Coast, including:

- Sending 34 members of the County’s Urban Search and Rescue Team to the Gulf Coast following the hurricane;
- A week later, sending more than 75 additional firefighters and police officers, along with equipment and apparatus to assist in the rebuilding of fire houses in New Orleans;
- Yesterday, Duncan announced that he has also dispatched Montgomery County Fire Chief Thomas Carr, Police Chief Thomas Manger and Homeland Security Director Gordon Aoyagi and their top deputies to New Orleans to lend support to firefighters and police officers from Montgomery County already in the city and to offer additional assistance to New Orleans officials. The team departed from BWI this morning. While in New Orleans, Chief Carr will meet with his counterpart in the city to offer additional personnel to support recovery efforts. The County also plans to offer to donate a fire truck to the New Orleans Fire Department.

On the homefront:

- the County established a Hurricane Relief Hotline – 240-777-2600—to serve as a clearinghouse for a variety of Hurricane Katrina-related relief efforts and to help match donations with the wide array of organizations throughout the region that are working to help Gulf Coast residents in the aftermath. The hotline will be staffed by volunteers Monday through

Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. People who are willing to house families should call the Hotline.

- the Silver Spring Jazz festival, designated by the Executive as a Katrina Relief Concert and featuring New Orleans native Wynton Marsalis as the headliner, raised more than \$22,000 for the Red Cross on Saturday.

The County has also arranged to provide the following services:

- Waive tuition at Montgomery College for Gulf Coast students impacted by the storm.
- Give County employees time off with pay to travel to the Gulf Coast as part of a faith-based or non-profit relief effort.
- Continue full salary to County employees who reside in Maryland, are members of the National Guard and are activated to support Katrina relief efforts; and
- Launch the Give and Ride food collection drive on Ride On buses. This week, through Saturday, in partnership with Manna Food Center, Ride On bus passengers who donate canned or nonperishable food and diapers starting Monday will get a free trip on the bus.

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